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NEWS RELEASE

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Special Master Reports “Satisfactory and Positive” Progress at Hope High School Complex

PROVIDENCE – In his third progress report to Education Commissioner Peter McWalters, Hope High Complex Special Master Nicholas C. Donohue says that “satisfactory and positive” progress has been made at Hope during the school year.

“It has been a good year at Hope,” Donohue writes in his report, which was released today (June 9th) by Commissioner McWalters. “The orderly school climate established at the beginning of the year has been maintained. In addition, there is a growing sense of community and caring” and a sharper focus on teaching and learning.

Among the positive developments at the Hope Complex, Donohue notes that School Improvement Teams are meeting, school-improvement plans have been developed, the advisory system has been established, and the school is preparing to meet the requirements of the new Rhode Island Diploma System.

He praises the school staff and leadership, the support from the district, and the efforts of community partners, especially in higher education, to improve education at Hope, as well as the work of a coach that the R.I. Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE) assigned to the complex.

Donohue notes some “significant challenges” that lie ahead: a low attendance rate, limited parental involvement, limited student involvement in governance, the need for more “real-world learning experiences,” the need for better communications about reform strategies, and a commitment by the Providence District to continue to provide Hope with adequate resources.

Overall, Donohue found that progress at the Hope Complex has been “satisfactory” in all key areas (the establishment of three small learning communities, personalization of learning, professionalism in practice, and active parents and community partners) with “no areas of critical concern identified at this time.”

“It’s clear that our intervention has positioned Hope as a school on the path to improvement,” Commissioner McWalters said. “Now, we need to focus on the capacity of the district to sustain and support excellence at Hope as we continue our school-improvement efforts.”

This is the third of Donohue’s reports to the Commissioner regarding Hope. Last year, following a series of public hearings, Commissioner McWalters issued an Order of Reconstitution and Corrective Action, in which he mandated that Hope High School be reorganized into three small, autonomous learning communities. McWalters appointed Donohue as a Special Master to monitor implementation of the Order.

The report is posted on the RIDE website, www.ride.ri.gov